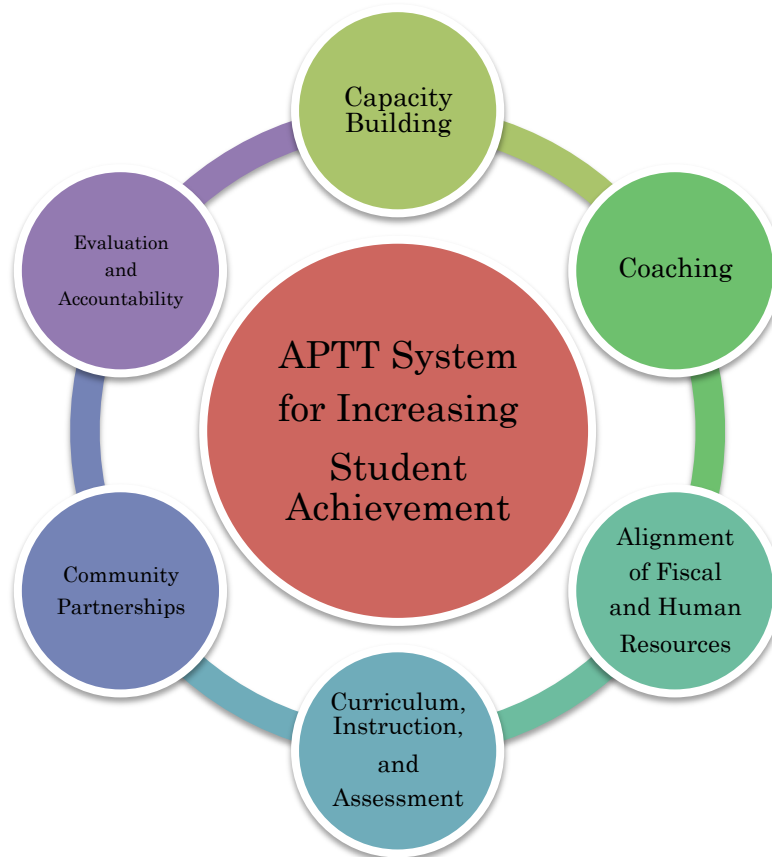


# Academic Parent-Teacher Teams



## WHAT ARE ACADEMIC PARENT-TEACHER TEAMS (APTT)?

WestEd's APTT is a classroom-based, teacher-led, data-driven family engagement model. Its innovative design is rooted in training families to support children's academic goals by linking home and school learning.\*

Coaching and technical support are central to APTT's approach. Its research-based infrastructure is rooted in aligning curriculum, instruction, and assessment as it builds the capacity of educators, families, and the community to advance student achievement. APTT's coaching and technical support activities also address aligning fiscal and human resources as well as incorporating program evaluation and accountability.

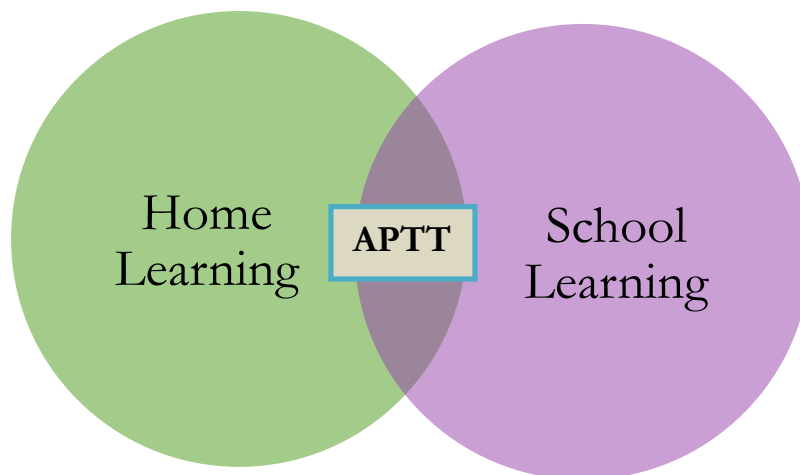
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\*For the purpose of this document, the terms parents and families are used interchangeably.

APTT is grounded in the notion that schools can thrive when families and teachers work together, as genuine partners, to maximize student learning inside and outside the school. Meaningful partnerships can be set in motion when schools establish a systematic approach to family engagement that gives all families the information, skills, and confidence they need to support grade-level learning goals at home. This mindset evolves when educators are provided with expert guidance, opportunities for capacity building, and practice in the area of family engagement.

APTT is a systematic and integrated approach to parent-teacher collaboration. Every year the classroom teacher invites families to participate in three 75-minute team meetings (all families are present) and one 30-minute individual session (the student, the teacher, and the student's family). During APTT meetings, teachers share student performance data that are actionable, review grade-level foundational skills, and demonstrate concrete activities that families can do at home to help students master those skills. The families practice the activities with other families in the class, and each family sets 60-day academic goals for their student. When families attend APTT meetings, they go home feeling informed, clear about their role, and committed to improving their child's learning outcomes. Through teacher coaching and mentoring, families improve their ability to be genuine partners for academic success.

## WHY IMPLEMENT APTT IN YOUR SCHOOL/DISTRICT/STATE?



Decades of research confirm that high expectations and communication in the home are powerful and essential ingredients in students' academic success. In addition, statistical evidence supports that families' informed actions and behaviors around learning and social and emotional development build a solid foundation for college and career-readiness. The APTT model leverages the assets, contributions, and aspirations of families in their students' learning process. With this mindset of families as pivotal contributing partners and a system for family-teacher collaboration, schools are better positioned to make substantial gains on their goals for improving student achievement. When schools create

an optimal pathway for families and teachers to work together as partners, family engagement grows, trust builds, students thrive, and schools improve.

### OUTCOMES AT APTT SCHOOLS

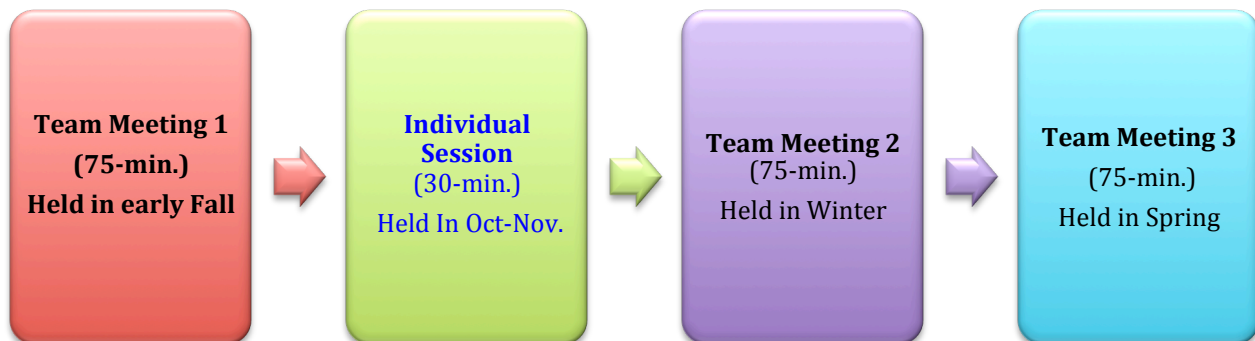
“APTT has caused a shift in school culture and mindset. There is a powerful realization that student success cannot be attained without clearly defined expectations, open and honest communication, collaboration and a sense that we [the education community and families] are all in this together.” (Gina Incorvaia, Academic Coach, Mapleton Public Schools, Colorado)

APTT schools have had the following outcomes:

- In the Creighton School District, Phoenix, Arizona, achievement outcomes for students in English language arts increased by 11 percent and mathematics achievement increased by 19 percent in APTT classrooms. In addition, over 90 percent of parents attended all APTT meetings.
- In Washington, D.C. schools in the second year of APTT implementation, 11.3 percent composite growth in English language arts and mathematics compared to 4.8 District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) average. In year one of implementation, growth in English language arts and mathematics was 6.4 percent compared to 3.8 percentage DCPS average.
- In Stockton, California, seven School Improvement Grant schools with the APPT program gained between 8 and 38 API points, placing them at the very top of most improved schools in the district.
- In Meadow Community School, in Mapleton School District, Colorado, test scores in English language arts and mathematics were 17% higher for students whose parents attended APTT meetings.

“Is APTT making a difference for learners from kindergarten on up? Test data show remarkable short-term academic gains for students. Parent participation at the team meetings is much higher than at conventional parent-teacher conferences in the Creighton District.” (Charlotte Boyle, Superintendent, Creighton School District, Phoenix, Arizona)

## WHAT DOES THE APTT MODEL LOOK LIKE?



The APTT model replaces traditional parent-teacher conferences. This exchange allows teachers an average of 25 to 30 hours of contracted time in a year that is used for planning, preparing, and conducting APTT meetings. The first APTT team meeting takes place within the first three weeks of school or as soon as benchmark data are available. It is paramount that updated data are available to drive planning, selection of grade-level foundational skills, instruction, and goal setting with families. Individual 30-minute sessions with each family come next. These meetings happen during October and November. The second APTT team meeting is held in the winter, and the last team meeting occurs in the spring. Families should have at least 60 days between team meetings to meet the academic goals they set for their students.

## HOW DO YOU SUCCESSFULLY IMPLEMENT APPT?

The following conditions can ensure that schools and districts successfully implement APTT:

- Create a mindset that families are valued partners for advancing student achievement.
- Offer professional development, training, and coaching for all faculty members.
- Provide grade-level collaborative planning time.
- Gather, analyze, and evaluate data to drive decision-making.
- Recognize family engagement as a key and integrated component in school improvement.
- Commit to follow the APTT model with fidelity.
- Provide regular communication from the principal to the staff, families, and community.
- Link family educational opportunities to student learning.
- Provide families with opportunities to develop leadership skills.
- Align fiscal and human resources intended for family engagement.

## THE WORK OF IMPLEMENTING THE APTT SYSTEM

WestEd's APTT staff will provide training and technical assistance in the following areas:

- Building a year-long family engagement action plan
- Aligning fiscal and human resources
- Selecting and training a site APTT champion (APTT school coach)
- Providing APTT orientation and training for administrators, teachers, and staff
- Supporting grade-level planning for APTT meetings
- Aligning school events and family learning opportunities to school improvement goals
- Offering coaching support during APTT meetings
- Observing team meetings and providing feedback
- Co-facilitating debriefing sessions following APTT meetings
- Strengthening communication with staff, families, and community members
- Organizing a district/school Family Engagement Leadership Team
- Preparing and administering teacher and family surveys
- Facilitating family focus groups
- Evaluating the program and analyzing outcomes
- Building an organizational infrastructure that is systemic, integrated, and sustainable

## APTT SCHOOL IMPLEMENTATION EXPENSES

APPT implementation includes the following potential costs:

- WestEd consultation and technical assistance
- Teacher pay for professional development (if outside contracted time)
- Translation services for families during APTT meetings (if necessary)
- Childcare services for families during APTT meetings
- Family take-home practice materials

**To discuss implementing APTT in your school or district, schedule a phone conference today with Maria C. Paredes - [mparede@wested.org](mailto:mparede@wested.org) - 480.823.9425.**